



# The Secretary General WEEKLY NEWS

Deepening Integration, Widening Cooperation.

5TH JUNE 2022



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EAC SECRETARY GENERAL'S OFFICE

- EAC Secretary General highlights increased regional trade and peace among the bloc's key priorities for the next year.
- EAC tables US\$91.5 Million Budget Estimates before EALA for the 2022/2023 Financial Year.

# EAC SECRETARY GENERAL HIGHLIGHTS INCREASED REGIONAL TRADE AND PEACE AMONG THE BLOC'S KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT YEAR.



Deepening economic integration, strengthening regional peace and security mechanisms, and implementing the road map for the attainment of the EAC Monetary Union are some of Hon. (Dr.) Peter Mathuki's key priorities in steering the regional integration agenda in the next year.

Dr. Mathuki underscored these priorities during a virtual forum dubbed, 'State of the EAC Forum - SG's 1 year in office,' seeking to share the progress, achievements, and challenges of the EAC in the last year, and the way forward.

The Secretary General listed the admission of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) into the bloc, adoption of 35% as the 4th Band of the EAC Common External Tariff, and resolution of 23 pressing Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) among the key achievements the Community registered during the last year.

He shared that five EAC Partner States, had launched their own Trade Information Portal (TIP).

The portals map out all imports, exports and transit procedures, including fees and time in the respective Partner States in an effort to enhance regional trade. The Secretariat is also mobilizing funds to enable the Republic of South Sudan to develop its own Trade Information Portal.

On the Monetary Union, the Secretary General shared that four EAC Partner States; Burundi, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have expressed interest and submitted their applications to host the East African Monetary Institute (EAMI).

"A verification Committee undertook a verification mission to the Partner States that have applied to host EAMI, to verify their suitability, and compiled a report that will be tabled before the 42nd Meeting of the Council of Ministers scheduled for later this month," he added.

On the EAC Political Federation, national consultations for the drafting of the Confederation Constitution have so far been held in the Republics of Burundi and Uganda.

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The Secretary General added that plans are at an advanced stage to hold similar consultations in the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Republics of Rwanda, Kenya and South Sudan in the 2022/2023 Financial Year.

Further, Dr. Mathuki noted that, "On 12th November 2021, the EAC Sectoral Council on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (SCTIFI) finalized and adopted the review of the EAC Elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers Act, 2017 and referred it to the EAC Sectoral Council on Legal and Judicial Affairs for legal scrubbing.

In highlighting the challenges faced by the Community in the last year, the Secretary General pronounced the Covid-19 pandemic as a major challenge.

"The Covid-19 pandemic grossly affected the implementation of the Community's activities, projects and programmes," said Dr. Mathuki.

"The Secretary General also noted that efforts were underway to ensure the conclusion of the process of developing a sustainable funding mechanism for the Community.

"The conclusion of the sustainable funding mechanism will address the financial challenges that the Community is experiencing, as we continue to engage with development partners to support EAC projects and programs," he added.

"The EAC will in the coming year focus on strengthening regional governance and inclusivity to improve peace and security in the build-up to an EAC Political Confederation.

The EAC will also prioritize Infrastructure development and increased participation of different stakeholders in the regional integration process," concluded Dr. Mathuki.

# EAC TABLES US\$91.5 MILLION BUDGET ESTIMATES BEFORE EALA FOR THE 2022/2023 FINANCIAL YEAR



The East African Community (EAC) tabled before the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) the budget estimates for the 2022/2023 Financial Year totaling US\$91,579,215.

“Economic growth in the EAC region averaged 5.9 percent in 2021, compared to an average of 2.3 percent in 2020. The strong regional economic growth in 2021 was largely supported by increased removal of COVID-19 related restrictions, public investments and strong performance in the productive sectors,” said Hon. Maina.

Hon. Maina said that the EAC would focus on 10 priority areas, namely: Peace and Security; Private Sector Development and Participation; Economic Integration; Improvement of productivity, Value addition and promotion of regional supply chains; EAC Digitalisation Agenda; Health; Implementation of the roadmap of the EAC Monetary Union, Infrastructure Development, and; Institutional strengthening and transformation.

“The Cabinet Secretary noted that the rising commodity prices, especially fuel and food, are impacting negatively on the welfare of East Africans and the world alike.

The 2022/2023 Budget is allocated to the EAC Organs and Institutions as follows: EAC Secretariat - US\$45,137,041; East African Legislative Assembly - US\$15,086,640; East African Court of Justice - US\$3,803,836; Lake Victoria Basin Commission - US\$8,289,474.

Further, East African Science & Technology Commission - US\$1,725,256; East African Kiswahili Commission - US\$1,284,219; East African Health Research Commission - US\$1,867,665; East African Competition Authority - US\$1,011,132; Inter-University Council for East Africa - US\$10,566,869, and; Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization - US\$2,807,083.

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This year's budget is a slight dip from the amount of US\$91,784,296 approved by the August House for the 2021/2022 Financial Year.

The Minister highlighted the finalization of the review of the Common External Tariff (CET), the elimination of twenty-five Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) reported during the year and the harmonization of over 145 standards for the commonly traded goods in over 16 sectors as some of the milestones the EAC had hit in the 2020/2021 financial year.

On the EAC Single Customs Territory, the Cabinet Secretary disclosed that the next financial year would, among other things, focus on the integration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of South Sudan into the Customs Union.

Customs would also focus on: Integrating the Electronic Cargo Tracking Systems along the Transit Corridors; Enhancement of Interconnectivity of systems in key sectors to facilitate information exchange, and; Capacity building for trade particularly small-scale women traders.

“On the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), the CS stated that the term of the 4th Assembly will end on 17th December, 2022.

“As Council, we shall give the Assembly all the necessary support to inaugurate the new Assembly,” said Hon. Maina. In the FY' 2022/2023, the Assembly will prioritize the enactment of Executive/Council Bills which are under consideration by its Standing Committees.

On the East African Court of Justice, the CS revealed the Court has in an effort to increase its visibility and bring its services closer to the people, decided to hold its November Sessions in the Partner States on a rotational basis.

Increasing the; number of cases concluded, visibility in the Partner States; skills of the Judges and staff of the Court and enhancing collaboration with other Regional and International Courts are among the Court's key priorities for the year.

# PICTORIAL



***The African Union Interfaith Dialogue Forum led by Amb. Mussie Hailu, Regional Director, United Religions Initiative- Africa, paid a courtesy call on EAC Secretary General Dr. Peter Mathuki. The discussions centered on collaborating with faith institutions to promote peace & security & good governance.***



***EAC Secretary General Dr. Peter Mathuki, EALA Speaker Rt. Hon Martin Ngoga, EAC Deputy Secretary General Eng. Stephen Mlote pose with Tanzania's Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Amb. Liberata Mulamula and Tanzania Members of Parliament, following the delivery of the budget speech by Amb. Mulamula.***

## NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

- Mathuki's first-year EAC scorecard shows wheels of integration turning, but slowly
- EAC tables \$91 million budget estimates for 2022/23
- EAC region seeks common ground, skills for youth, in new education systems
- Parallel exchange rates in Kenya emerge as dollar shortage bites
- Uganda's port projects derail maritime transport on Lake Victoria
- Rising trade volumes blamed for congestion at Namanga border post
- Tanzania starts exporting coal to European markets
- South Sudan river transport reopens after 11 years
- DR Congo bars RwandAir from its airspace as relations with Kigali deteriorate
- Rwanda committed to peaceful resolution of Congo conflict - Biruta

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- 2nd Coordination Meeting of the Heads of RECs on the Implementation of the AfCFTA
- The 42nd Ordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers



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